AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the following claims:

63. (Currently Amended) A message notification system comprising:

a sender interface comprising an audio message compose mechanism to receive from the sender a composed audio message; and

a telephony message delivery management mechanism to manage delivery of the audio message via telephone calls to persons answering telephones and to answering machines, the delivery management mechanism comprising a transaction server, a database, a scheduler, and a message queue, wherein the transaction server accesses the database, the scheduler, and the message queue ~~an answer detection mechanism to detect when a call for delivery of the audio message is answered by a person answering a telephone and when the call is answered by an answering machine, the answer detection mechanism comprising an answer detector to detect a speech signal response when the call is answered and to determine a length of the speech signal, a speech signal of shorter length being deemed an indication that the audio message to be sent is answered by a person and a sustained speech signal of longer length being deemed an indication that the audio message to be sent is answered by an answering machine~~.

64. (Previously Presented) The message notification system according to claim 63, wherein the sender interface comprises an audio message selection mechanism to select delivery of an audio message to a plural set of recipients via a telephony route.

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65. (Previously Presented) The message notification system according to claim 64, wherein the audio message selection mechanism comprises a voice message selection mechanism to select delivery of a voice message.

66. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 63, wherein the sender interface comprises an audio message selection mechanism to select delivery of an audio message to at least one recipient via a telephony route.

67. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 63, wherein the composed audio message comprises an audio segment of a composite message intended for telephony delivery, the composite message further comprising one or more non-audio segments intended for another mode of delivery.

68. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 63, wherein the message compose mechanism comprises an audio header portion and an audio trailer portion, the audio header portion comprising an audio header message to be provided to a recipient telling the recipient he or she is about to receive a message from the sender, the audio trailer portion comprising an audio trailer message to facilitate a response to the message by the recipient.

69. (Currently Amended) A message notification system comprising:

a sender interface, the sender interface comprising an audio message selection mechanism to select delivery of an audio message to a plural set of recipients via a telephony route, the sender interface further comprising an audio message compose mechanism to receive from the sender a composed audio message; and

a telephony message delivery management mechanism to manage delivery of the audio message via telephone calls to persons answering telephones and to

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answering machines, the delivery management mechanism comprising a transaction server, a database, a scheduler, and a message queue wherein the transaction server accesses the database, the scheduler, and the message queue, the delivery management mechanism further comprising an answer detection mechanism to detect when a call for delivery of the audio message is answered by a person answering a telephone and when the call is answered by an answering machine, the delivery management mechanism further comprising a personal delivery mechanism and further comprising an answering machine delivery mechanism;

the personal delivery mechanism delivering one message when the call is detected to be answered by a person, and the answering machine delivery mechanism delivering another message when the call is detected to be answered by an answering machine.

70. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 69, wherein the sender interface comprises a browser.

71. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 69, wherein the sender interface comprises a client computer.

72. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 69, wherein the sender interface comprises a computer with customer access to a notification server and a telephone.

73. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 69, wherein the sender interface comprises a telephone.

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74. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 69, wherein the sender interface comprises a portion of a telephony server to respond to spoken customer commands.

75. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 69, wherein the audio message comprises a voice message.

76. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 69, wherein the composed audio message comprises an audio segment of a composite message intended for telephony delivery, the composite message further comprising one or more non-audio segments intended for another mode of delivery.

77. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 69, wherein the message compose mechanism comprises an audio header portion and an audio trailer portion, the audio header portion comprising an audio header message to be provided to a recipient telling the recipient he or she is about to receive a message from the sender, and the audio trailer portion comprising an audio trailer message to facilitate a response to the message by the recipient.

78. (Currently Amended) A message notification system comprising:

a sender interface comprising an address book selection interface, the address book selection interface comprising contact addresses presented to the sender for selection as message recipients, the message recipients comprising human recipients, the sender interface further comprising a message selection mechanism to select delivery of a message to a plural set of selected recipients via a communications route, the address book selection interface comprising a message type categorization mechanism to identify contacts in categories likely to receive similar messages, so that the sender selecting

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through the address book selection interface a given category causes a contact selection

display to be presented to the sender of individually selectable contacts limited to the

given category; and

    a message delivery management mechanism to manage delivery of the

message to the selected message recipients, the delivery management mechanism

comprising a transaction server, a database, a scheduler, and a message queue; wherein

the transaction server accesses the database, the scheduler, and the message queue.

79. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 78, wherein the sender

interface comprises a browser.

80. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 78, wherein the sender

interface comprises a client computer.

81. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 78, wherein the sender

interface comprises a computer with customer access to a notification server and a

telephone.

82. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 78, wherein the sender

interface comprises a telephone.

83. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 78, wherein the sender

interface comprises a portion of a telephony server to respond to spoken commands.

84. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 78, wherein the

selection of a given category causes a contact selection display to be presented to the

sender of individually selectable contacts in the given category, so that all or a subset of

contacts in the given category can be selected as recipients and sent the message.

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85. (New) The system according to claim 63, wherein the sender interface interaction mechanism comprises a transaction server to instruct questions to be asked of the sender via the sender interface.

86. (New) The system according to claim 63, wherein the message queue comprises a job queue to implement and schedule message jobs.

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